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## Birthday Plans

November 4 is the 20th birthday of UNESCO—the agency that Nehru called "the conscience of the world community." Both the General Conference of UNESCO, meeting in Paris, and the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, which met in New Orleans in September, are using the birthday primarily as an opportunity for appraisal and planning rather than as an occasion for celebration.

Past achievements must seem disappointing when measured against the stirring expression of hope in the preamble to UNESCO's constitution: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." But never since UNESCO was founded has the world been at peace, and the million dollars a year it can spend on direct efforts to build peace is no match for the estimated \$140 billion a year the world spends on armaments.

Past achievements seem more impressive when measured in terms of the intent "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture."

Science has always been prominent in UNESCO's name, but in the early years was given little programmatic emphasis; major attention then was on education and the use of mass media to promote human rights and to foster international understanding. As time has gone on, the role of science has increased, and accomplishments have become significant. The UNESCO *Source Book on Science Teaching* has been printed in 18 languages and will soon be available in 14 more. Other scientific activities have included the arid zone research program; close collaboration with the International Council of Scientific Unions, the International Geophysical Year, and the International Hydrological Decade; establishment of the European Nuclear Research Organization (CERN) and the International Brain Research Organization; and a 6-year study of the Indian Ocean, which involved 25 nations. In 1964 UNESCO gave the scientific part of its program higher priority by recognizing science as one of the major factors necessary to achieve economic and social development.

The next 20 years will surely have their difficulties, as have the first 20. Budgets are limited; many more nations than existed 20 years ago call for a greater variety of assistance. In efforts to aid developing countries, UNESCO has been far from alone. Other multinational efforts and many binational assistance programs have funds that, in total, far exceed UNESCO's budget, which even now, for all UNESCO's activities throughout the world, is no greater than that of a single fair-sized university. Bilateral and regional agreements and programs will and should continue. But UNESCO wants a larger part in the total effort. Although separate and individually planned efforts to help a country may all be desirable, they may also get in each other's way or may compete for the same limited talents and local resources. Without inhibiting other efforts, UNESCO could have a more influential role in establishing plans and guiding principles within which national, bilateral, and multinational efforts could work together more effectively. If it is to serve this larger purpose, UNESCO needs greater support from all of its 120 member countries.

There will surely continue to be difficulties in trying to build peace in an unpeaceful world. But UNESCO now has the surer touch that comes from experience, and early efforts that were sometimes marked more by enthusiasm than by reality have given way to more careful planning and more hard-headed weighing of priorities. "The conscience of the world community" merits financial and moral support as it plans for the years ahead.—DAEL WOLFLE